Breast Cancer Questions and Factors, Environmental Risk Issues, and Health Tips
Zero Breast Cancer – Adolescent Education Project (Marin County, California)

Did You Know?
In California, the average woman has a one in eight chance of developing breast cancer over her lifetime. A girl’s developing breasts may be more vulnerable to environmental exposures during her teen years. Only 5-10% of breast occurs because of an inherited flaw in specific genes involved in breast cancer. It is possible (but rare) for men to develop breast cancer. The majority of women who develop breast cancer have few known risk factors.

What is Breast Cancer?
Breast cancer begins when cells in the milk-producing structures in the breast divide and grow out of control. When cells multiply over time without any order, they can form a lump, or tumor. Some breast tumors are harmless or benign. Tumors that spread and invade surrounding tissue are called invasive breast cancers. No one knows exactly what causes breast cells to become cancerous. Several factors may work together.

What are some of the known risk factors for breast cancer?
Having one or more of the following risk factors does not necessarily mean that you will develop breast cancer. Specific healthy behaviors may reduce overall risk. Other factors are random or less controllable.

Factors that may Reduce Breast Cancer Risk
- Regular exercise starting in the teen years
- Eliminating exposure to tobacco smoke
- Avoiding or limiting daily alcohol use
- Medical therapies for high-risk individuals
- Maintaining a normal adult weight
- Breastfeeding after childbirth

Factors that are known to Increase Breast Cancer Risk
- Major: Family history of breast and ovarian cancer
- Having a personal history of breast cancer
- A biopsy that shows abnormal breast cell growth
- Hereditary mutation (mistake) in specific genes
- Other: Younger age when menstrual periods begin
- Older age when menstrual periods end
- Full term pregnancy (childbirth) after age 30

Dietary factors can modulate the effects of cancer causing agents by working to repair cell damage. A diet rich in plant-based foods (whole grains, fruits, and vegetables) helps to support a healthy immune system overall.

What should I know about environmental exposures that are suspected to play a role in breast cancer?
Specific environmental factors are being studied for their possible links to breast cancer earlier in life. Exposures to cancer causing substances that are thought to influence lifetime breast cancer risk include: second-hand tobacco smoke, moderate to excessive alcohol use, and chemicals that can mimic estrogen. Synthetic chemicals present in personal care products and manufactured goods surround us. For example, Butyl Benzyl Phthalates are a class of chemical compounds used to manufacture soft plastics and some cosmetics. Scientists suspect that BBP phthalates may promote breast cancer in the very early stages. Researchers are trying to learn more about environmental exposures and their effect on cancer related genes. Meanwhile, it makes sense to use a precautionary approach to exposures that are identified now as suspected.

What are some things I can do about suspected environmental exposures and breast cancer risk?
Be aware of your everyday exposures, read labels, and use caution with suspected exposures, for example:
▫ Avoid re-using clear plastic (polycarbonate) water bottles that have been sitting in the sun or absorbing heat
▫ Use opaque bottles made with the plastics PET, or polyethylene, and store sport bottles in a cool place.
▫ Be aware of ingredients in cosmetics and personal care products (check the list at www.safecosmetics.org)

What do we know about cancer incidence in Marin County?
Bay Area breast cancer rates are high in both Marin and San Francisco counties. Scientists, community agencies, and Zero Breast Cancer are actively researching this puzzle. Some of the risk factors associated with breast cancer (e.g. later age of first live birth) are common to a large segment of women who live in Marin County. There is no specific evidence to date that exposures in the Bay Area environment itself are causal. The Bay Area Breast Cancer and Environment Research Center, The Buck Center for Age Research, and the Marin County Department of Health Services are looking for clues to explain Marin’s higher incidence. There are approximately 240 estimated new cases of invasive breast cancer in Marin County each year. Most of the Marin women (and men) who have breast cancer are living longer because of newer medical advances.

How does breast cancer risk change over time? What if you inherit a known genetic risk factor?+
When you are under age 25, or if you are male, your risk is less than 1%. By the time a woman is 85, she has a “one in seven” chance of developing breast cancer in this region. If you inherit a defect related the breast cancer genes (BRCA-1; BRCA-2) your risk is significantly higher. Genetic counselors are available to help.

What steps can I take regarding breast cancer risk for myself now, and over the next ten years?+
▫ Eliminate known environmental exposures such as tobacco and second-hand smoke. Limit alcohol use.
▫ Eat healthy meals and snacks that include more fruits and vegetables and fewer saturated or trans-fats
▫ Know your family history of cancer and breast cancer – consult with your doctor or healthcare provider
▫ Exercise regularly – that means an average of 30 minutes of physical activity on most days of the week
▫ Girls - Learn about breast self exams and get annual breast exams from a doctor, beginning at age 20
▫ Avoid obesity in your adult years – aim to maintain a normal range of weight in relation to your height
▫ Be alert to suspected chemical exposures and look for safer alternatives in products you use everyday.

What is my community doing about this issue now?
Many hospitals, clinics and community programs provide information, treatment and support for persons affected by breast cancer. The Marin Cancer Institute (Marin General Hospital), Kaiser Permanente, and the American Cancer Society help with services for this disease. Zero Breast Cancer’s mission is to find the causes of breast cancer through community participation in the research process. The Marin Women’s Study (MCDHS) is collecting data. Cancer research institutions monitor statistics and evaluate scientific evidence. Several groups are working to change laws and regulations to protect the community’s environmental health.

How can I make a difference for others?
▫ Keep a copy of your Personal Action Plan. Change one health habit that can also reduce breast cancer risk.
▫ Stay informed on this topic. Visit one of the information resources listed below.
▫ Share and discuss the information from today’s presentation with a friends and or family members.
▫ Volunteer your time to local organizations that are dedicated to breast cancer research and prevention

September 2006
Breast Cancer support programs for families:  The Marin Cancer Institute -Marin General Hospital
Kaiser Permanente Medical Center
UCSF Comprehensive Cancer Center, Cancer Risk Program

Where can I find more information about breast cancer, environmental factors and health tips?
Zero Breast Cancer: www.zerobreastcancer.org
Northern California Cancer Center: www.nccc.org
National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences: http://www.niehs.nih.gov
Bay Area Breast Cancer and Environment Research Center: www.bcerc.org
Marin County Department of Health and Human Services: www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/HH/main/index.cfm
National Cancer Institute: www.cancer.gov
Cornell University: http://envirocancer.cornell.edu
American Cancer Society: www.cancer.org

*The information presented here is for educational purposes only and is not intended to take the place of medical advice.*
Breast Cancer Factors that You Can Control
(or Help Someone You Care About)

- Limiting daily alcohol use
- Avoiding tobacco and second hand smoke exposure
- Keeping your weight in a healthy range for your height and body type
- Exercising and being physically active most days of the week
- Healthy nutrition – eat more fruits, vegetables and whole grains – limit “junk food”

The mission of Zero Breast Cancer (formerly Marin Breast Cancer Watch) is to find the causes of breast cancer through community participation in the research process. The Adolescent Breast Cancer Prevention, Risk Reduction and Education Program was created with funding from individual donors and the Avon Foundation, To Celebrate Life Breast Cancer Foundation, and the Marin Community Foundation.

The Peer Education Breast Cancer Awareness project is a partnership with the Tamalpais Union High School District and Sir Francis Drake High School Peer Resource program.

For further information...

Zero Breast Cancer
www.zerobreastcancer.org

National Cancer Institute:
www.cancer.gov

National Institute of Environmental Health Science:
www.niehs.nih.gov

Northern California Cancer Center:
www.nccc.org

American Cancer Society
www.cancer.org

Marin County Department of Health Services
www.co.marin.ca.us
414-507-2560

The Marin Cancer Institute
Marin General Hospital
415-935-7822

Marin Women’s Clinic
415-444-2173

Kaiser Permanente Medical Center
415-444-2173

UCSF Cancer Risk Program
415-885-7779

Graphic Design: Keason Holohan
Did you know?

- Breast Cancer affects many women who have no known risk factors.
- A young girl’s breasts are changing rapidly— that’s a reason to use precautions with known and suspect environmental exposures.
- The majority of women with breast cancer are surviving and coping with the disease.
- A small percentage of people who have breast cancer are men.
- Alcohol and tobacco use can increase your risk for breast cancer.
- Researchers and medical scientists are working to prevent and control breast cancer.
- The power of your choices can make a difference for your health.

Environmental Factors can influence the course of breast cancer, other diseases, and our normal health. Scientists think that some synthetic chemicals may affect hormones and cells in growing breasts. Learn more about suspected exposures—avoid them!

Breast Cancer and Breast Health Awareness:

Ask questions—talk about breast cancer to parents, teachers, friends and your doctor or nurse. Know your family history for cancer and breast cancer and get regular breast exams (start at age 20). There are places to go for help in Marin. Check out the breast cancer resource list and information sites. Check out the breast cancer resource list and information sites in this brochure.

The Community is Working on the Breast Cancer Issue.

Researchers are working with Marin residents. The Bay Area Breast Cancer and Environment Research Center, the Marin County Department of Health, Zero Breast Cancer, Kaiser Permanente, the Marin Cancer Institute, the Buck Institute for Age Research and Bay Area universities are conducting studies to find clues and answers. Concerned citizens are working with government leaders to promote a healthy environment.

Breast cancer begins when cells inside the mammary gland change and grow out of control. There are many risk factors for breast cancer that can increase the odds for the disease.

Breast Cancer is like a puzzle—look at some of the pieces above.

You Hold Some of the Keys

Here are some suggestions:

- Think about the information on your handouts from Peer Resource and Zero Breast Cancer.
- Check out a web-site from this brochure—learn how to reduce breast cancer risk—pass it on!
- Think about careers in science, technology, health, education, and research—you can help solve this puzzle.
What is Breast Cancer?

- Breast cancer begins when normal cells in the breast start to change and grow out of control.
- Symptoms may include a lump or a change in the shape or feel of the breast.
- Breast cancer can affect any adult woman, including Latinas.

Breast Cancer Risk Factors- Some That We Can Change

- A woman in California has about 1 in 8 chance of developing breast cancer during her lifetime. For California Latina women, the chance is lower, about 1 in 11.
- It is rare for men to develop breast cancer.
- It is possible for a younger woman to have breast cancer in her 30s, but most women develop breast cancer after age 50.

Healthy Living Habits

- By practicing these Healthy Living Habits, adolescent girls and women can reduce some future risk for breast cancer:
  - Be physically active and exercise for at least 30 minutes on most days.
  - Women should limit alcohol and not drink more than one alcoholic beverage a day.
  - Avoid tobacco smoke, including second-hand smoke.
  - Eat a balanced diet with 5–7 servings of fruits and vegetables each day.
  - Maintain a healthy body weight as a teen and as an adult woman.

Ways to Check for Breast Cancer

- Breast exams look for changes in the normal shape or feel of the breast.
- If you are 20–25 years old, you can talk about having a breast exam with a health educator or doctor or nurse that you trust.
- A woman over 40 years of age should have her first mammogram (breast x-ray) or MRI to look for small changes or possible cancer in the breasts.

Who Breast Cancer Affects

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- It is rare for men to develop breast cancer.
- It is possible for a younger woman to have breast cancer in her 30s, but most women develop breast cancer after age 50.

Breast Cancer Risk Factors- Some That We Can Change

- A risk factor is something that increases your chance for a disease.
- A woman’s risk is higher if she has a family history for breast cancer.
- Practicing Healthy Living Habits helps to reduce the risk for breast cancer.
- Teen girls who exercise for at least 30 minutes each day, and who continue to be physically active as adults, may reduce some of their future risk for breast cancer.

The Environment and Our Health - Use Prevention with Suspected Chemicals

- Scientists are concerned that certain chemicals in plastics and personal care products may cause health problems. One example of these chemicals is called phthalates (pronounced “thal-ates”).
- When phthalates are absorbed in the body, they may affect the reproductive hormones.
- Phthalates can be found in water bottles, children’s toys, cosmetics, and other plastics. Products that contain phthalates have the number “3” or the letters “V” and “PVC” on their label.
- It is better to choose products with no phthalates, or with the numbers 1, 2, 4, or 5 on their label.

Ask About Your Family History

- A woman’s risk is higher if her mother or her sister has been diagnosed with breast cancer.
- Ask your mother if your family has a history of breast cancer (does your mother’s and father’s family) and talk it over with someone that you trust including your doctor or nurse.
- It is possible to develop breast cancer even if you do not have a family history of breast cancer.

Medical Treatment for Breast Cancer

- There are many medical treatments that help women to recover from breast cancer.
- Treatments may include radiation, chemotherapy, medicines (gels) and surgery to remove a tumor or cancer from the breast.
- It is important to find (detect) breast cancer early and get medical treatment, even if you do not have health insurance.
- Researchers are working on better treatments for people with breast cancer.

Resources and Treatment for People Who Have Breast Cancer

Resources in Our Community

- Marin County Clinics that offer breast health services for all women, including low-income women:
  - Women’s Health Services (HHS Clinics - San Rafael) 415-507-4019
  - Planned Parenthood Golden Gate (San Rafael, Novato Wellness Center) 1-800-967-7526
  - Coastal Health Alliance and Tina Caring Program (West Marin) 415-663-8666
  - Marin Community Clinics (Novato, Greenbrae and San Rafael) 415-448-1500
  - Family Pact program information: www.familypact.org

In America, we can find the causes of breast cancer through community participation in the research process:

- The project coordinator is Susan Schwartz (ZBC).
- Advisors include Dr. Juliana Dazardoff and Claudia Guerra (UCSF). Janice Barlow (ZBC), Berta Campos and Melissa Fike (Novato Youth Wellness Collaborative) and Novato Latina student representatives.

Resources and Treatment for People Who Have Breast Cancer


The State of California helps low income women with breast cancer to obtain treatment. Call 1-800-511-2300 or visit: www.dhs.ca.gov/cancerdetection/breastcancer/breastcancer.htm for information in Spanish.

Women under age 40 who have breast cancer can contact the Young Survival Coalition at: www.youngsurvivor.org/es/community

Information and Support for Latinas

- American Cancer Society information in English or Spanish; www.cancer.org/docroot/ESS/ESPD.asp
- Latinas Contra Cancer: www.latinascontracancer.org
- Redes En Acción: www.redesenaccion.org
- Mujeres Activas! support group at the Canal Welcome Center: Latinas can contact the Marin Center for Independent Living for this group or for assistance to qualify for treatment services: www.marinicl.org or call 415-459-6245
- Women Caring for Women/Mujeres Cuidando Mujeres assists Latinas over age 40 to enroll in the Every Woman Counts Cancer Detection Program. Call 415-584-3449 (Spanish); 415-584-3444 (English); or visit: www.latinaabc.org

Teens

- Planned Parenthood Golden Gate: 1-800-967-7526, Teen Page: www espanol.pgg.org. PGGG (drop-in)
- Teen Clinics: Novato Wellness Center and central San Rafael


Invitation to Workshop in the Marin Women’s Study, a local breast cancer research study designed to learn more about breast cancer risk in our community. Visit www.marinwomensstudy.org or call 415-507-4077.

Students can learn about local breast cancer research at the Buck Institute for Age Research: www.buckinstitute.org and Dominican University of California: www.dominican.edu

Please share this information with your Family and Friends

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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RECONOCIMIENTOS

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Visit http://bayarea.bcerc.org; or contact Zero Breast Cancer at 415.507.1949 or: www.zerobreastcancer.org

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Please share this information with your Family and Friends.
¿Qué es el cáncer de seno?

- Si tienes de 20 a 25 años de edad, puedes empezar a cambiar y a crecer sin control.
- Algunos síntomas pueden incluir la presencia de una bolita o algo diferente en el seno.
- El cáncer de seno puede afectar a cualquier mujer adulta, incluyendo a las latinas.

Información sobre los senos:

- El seno está compuesto por una glándula mamaria (que produce leche), la cual crece con rapidez en las adolescentes y mujeres jóvenes.
- Algunas niñas y mujeres pueden estar sensibles al tacto antes de que inicie su ciclo menstrual.
- La mamografía es importante para detectar cambios en el seno.
- El cáncer de seno comienza cuando las células normales del seno empiezan a cambiar y a crecer sin control.

Factores de riesgo del cáncer de seno – Algunos de ellos se pueden modificar:

- Los factores de riesgo son algo que aumenta la probabilidad de enfermedad.
- El riesgo de una mujer es mayor si en su familia hay historia de cáncer de seno.
- Practicar hábitos para una vida saludable ayuda a reducir el riesgo de desarrollar cáncer de seno.
- Las adolescentes que hacen ejercicio al menos durante 30 minutos al día y que continúan haciendo ejercicio de adultos, podrían reducir parte del riesgo de desarrollar cáncer de seno en el futuro.

El medio ambiente y la salud – Ten precaución con las sustancias químicas que se sospecha son peligrosas para la salud:

- A los científicos les inquieta el hecho de que algunas sustancias químicas presentes en el plástico y en los productos para el cuidado personal podrían causar problemas de salud. Una de estas sustancias químicas recibe el nombre de fталatos (pronunciada “talatos”).
- Cuando los fталatos son absorbidos por el organismo, podrían afectar las hormonas reproductivas.
- Los fталatos pueden encontrarse presentes en artículos como botellas de agua, juguetes infantiles, cosméticos y otros plásticos. Los productos que contienen fталatos llevan el número “3” o “5” en la etiqueta.

Información y apoyo para mujeres latinas:


Actividades de investigación sobre el cáncer de seno en el Condado de Marin y en el Área de la Bahía de San Francisco:

- Investigaciones se incluyen en el sitio Web de la UC San Francisco.
- El Instituto de Tejido de la Bahía (Bay Area Breast Cancer and the Environment Research Center) ofrece ayuda a las mujeres de bajos recursos.
- Los estudiantes pueden obtener información acerca de las investigaciones locales sobre el cáncer de seno a través del sitio Web del Instituto Buck de Investigación sobre el Envejecimiento (Buck Institute for Age Research) en www.buckinstitute.org; y del sitio Web de la Dominica University of California en www.dominican.edu.
- Puedes obtener video clips sobre las sustancias químicas presentes en los artículos para el cuidado personal y en el plástico a través de la Cornell University: www.envirocancer.com.
Latina Adolescent Outreach Project
Susan Schwartz, Claudia Guerra, Julianna Deardorff, Janice Barlow

BACKGROUND
- Accurate, developmentally appropriate information for adolescent girls specific to breast cancer risk and prevention
- Latinos adolescents and young adults encounter unique cultural and linguistic barriers to health information and cancer prevention services
- Latinos represent the fastest-growing ethnic demographic group in Marin County, California and the United States
- The prevalence of breast cancer among young Latinos appears to be increasing; therefore it is important to consider early breast cancer interventions that are culturally relevant within this population
- Zero Breast Cancer (ZBC) is a bilingual outreach from the University of California, San Francisco, USA that serves Latinas and families
- ZBC and UCSF engaged the National Latino Breast Cancer Collaborative in project's planning and development
- Ten focus groups were conducted with Latina adolescents led by a bilingual health educator
- The goal of the first focus group was to determine cultural, social and familial factors in the intervention adaptation process. The goal of the second focus group was to validate the adapted content
- Participants in the first and second focus groups were interviewed using open-ended questions
- Focus groups included Latina students, parents and peers related to the health educator adaptation
- A professional designer composed the brochure with a dual-sided English/Spanish format
- The design of the brochure integrates culturally-sensitive terminology and graphics to convey breast cancer educational messages and information

OBJECTIVES
- To culturally adapt and translate into Spanish three components of the Breast Cancer and Environment – Peer Education Tool Kit
- To disseminate the adapted translated materials to high school health education and community organizations

WORK PERFORMED
- The Tool Kit was adapted by project staff and administers into a bilingual brochure with seven message categories. Each category presents bulleted statements for ease of reading in English and Spanish. The brochure includes a Community Brochure Graphics view, and an environmental exposure example
- The brochure should include Spanish language health services and web site resources for Latinas
- Mothers, health providers and families were considered trusted sources of health information
- Adolescents were concerned with risk to self and cultural values surrounding breast health
- It’s important to learn about breast cancer and to be able to handle the situation
- Limited awareness of potential health effects of environmental exposures
- Adolescents suggested emphasizing benefits of physical activity and a healthy lifestyle
- Family respect and support is important
- Include images of mothers and daughters
- Brochure should include Spanish language health services and web site resources for Latinas

RESULTS & DISCUSSION
- The new brochure, Breast Cancer Tips for Latina Teens, Young Women and Families, integrates culturally-grounded terminology and graphics to convey breast cancer educational messages and information for Latinas
- The brochure encourages Latinas and families to discuss breast cancer risk and protective factors and preventive health information
- The brochure is intended for dissemination to high schools and community programs serving Latinas adolescents and women
- Many successful university-community collaborations have been initiated based on the premise of working together to demonstrate the feasibility and effectiveness of targeted intervention programs with underrepresented ethnic minority groups
- The work of Zero Breast Cancer and their advisors at the University of California San Francisco along with the National Latino Breast Cancer Collaborative, represents a community outreach program that will lead to effective health messages and prevention strategies with Latina adolescents

Acronyms/Abbreviations:
- BACkGrOunD
- OBJeCtives
- WORK PeRFOrMeD
- RESULTS & DISCUSSION

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www.zerobreastcancer.org